

Appl. No.: 09/846,424
Amdt. dated 10/11/2005
Reply to Office action of July 12, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The amendments above and the remarks below are in response to an Office Action mailed on July 12, 2005 in the present application. In the Office Action, Claims 1-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for an alleged lack of clarity about the scope of the claimed invention. In addition, Claims 1-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,901,430 to Smith ("Smith").

35 U.S.C. §112

With respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, it was suggested that the Applicant "insert an objective of the claimed invention in the preamble to improve clarity," and that a supply chain "is not a proper scope of the claimed invention." See page 2, section 3 of the Office Action.

The invention as recited in Claim 1 describes a supply chain visibility system that connects parts suppliers and a recipient to facilitate 1) creation of a final set of parts for each of a plurality of effectivities (e.g., for each of a plurality of aircraft) and 2) coordination of a supply chain of the final set of parts. This is accomplished by providing, via a network, graphical user interfaces that are associated with the suppliers and recipients. Creation of the final set of parts is facilitated by a configuration panel that displays a final configuration agreed to by the suppliers and recipient(s). Thus, each supplier and recipient is made aware of the final configuration agreed-upon by the suppliers and recipient(s).

A template panel displays a common set of parts for assembling at least a portion of the final configuration. Thus, each supplier and recipient is made aware of the parts that make up a template representing parts common to each of the plurality of effectivities. A statement of work panel displays the final set of parts for each of the effectivities, wherein the final set of parts are derived from the common set of parts. Thus, each supplier and recipient is made aware of the final set of parts for each particular effectivity (e.g., for each particular aircraft) as they are exploded, extrapolated or otherwise derived from the template. A processing element of the supply chain and visibility system is configured to update the shipping status of the final set of parts on the statement of work panel, thereby allowing planning for assembly.

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The preamble of Claims 1 and 16 have been amended in accordance with the above explanation for clarity. In addition, the term "finished assembly" has been deleted from Claims 1 and 16 for further clarification of Claims 1 and 16. Applicant submits that the rejection of Claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph has therefore been overcome.

35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Smith discloses, generally, an Internet based system for ordering automobiles by tagging a specific automobile somewhere along a supply chain or assembly line. For example, the system begins at block 106 (Figure 4A) by searching in dealership inventory for the particular make, model, color, etc., of vehicle desired by a consumer. Vehicles in transit are matched (block 408) if available. If a match isn't found, searches are performed in-plant for vehicles being assembled (block 410). If again a match isn't found, the search extends to vehicles in an order bank (block 412) and yet to be assembled. If any of these searches return a vehicle, then it can be tagged and reserved by the consumer (block 440).

Smith also discloses placing an order for an automobile meeting the purchaser's specifications. As shown in Figure 4B, for example, if no match is found, or no near-match is acceptable, then the consumer may place a customer order (block 418). Regardless, once the vehicle is tagged or ordered, the system displays a delivery schedule (block 446). The consumer may select periodic reports on the status of the vehicle (block 448). Status update reports may also include updated delivery dates, including changes from the original date due to changes in the manufacturing or transportation schedule. See, column 10, lines 59-67 of Smith.

Claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested by Smith. Claim 1 includes a system that displays a final part configuration agreed to by suppliers and a recipient. In Smith, there is no negotiation of the vehicle configurations to come to an agreed part configuration, the recipient only has the options provided by the vehicle manufacturer. In addition, Claim 1 recites generation of a statement of work panel for each of a plurality of effectivities (e.g., multiple aircraft) by applying a common set of parts to each of the effectivities. Smith only describes handling a single vehicle at a time, and not the generation of a statement of work for each of a plurality of vehicles based on the common set of parts.

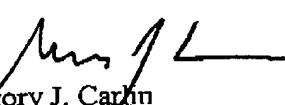
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Similarly, Claim 16 describes a method that includes displaying a final configuration agreed to by the suppliers and recipient and generating a final set of parts by applying the common set of parts across each of the plurality of effectivities. Claims 1 and 16 should therefore be allowable over Smith and the remaining cited references. The remaining Claims 2-15 and 17-29 depend from, and further patentably distinguish, Claims 1 or 16 and should therefore also be allowable. The rejection of Claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) has therefore been overcome.

In view of the remarks and amendments presented above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-29 of the present application are in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

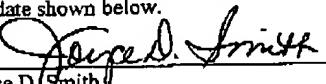

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CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the US Patent and Trademark Office at Fax No. (571) 273-8300 on the date shown below.


Joyce D. Smith

Date: October 11, 2005